

## Message Text

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43

ACTION ARA-10

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FM AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1080

C O N F I D E N T I A L SAN JOSE 3325

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, CS, US

SUBJECT: PRESIDENT ODUBER INDIRECTLY ACCUSES U.S. DIPLOMATS OF  
POLITICAL AGITATION AGAINST HIS GOVERNMENT

1. LA NACION OF TUESDAY, AUGUST 5, CARRIED TEXT OF LETTER BY  
PRESIDENT ODUBER IN REPLY TO THAT NEWSPAPER'S EDITORIAL OF  
AUGUST 1 ON ESCALATION OF CORRUPTION IN COSTA RICA.

2. IN A SEPARATE PARAGRAPH REFERRING TO CASE OF VESCO,  
WHICH HAD BEEN CITED BY LA NACION AS ONE EXAMPLE OF CORRUPTION,  
ODUBER WROTE: QUOTE IN THE VESCO CASE THERE IS MORE TO SAY  
AND THE MOMENT TO SPEAK CLEARLY WILL SOON COME, WHEN WE HAVE  
ASSURED OURSELVES THAT THE LAWS OF THE REPUBLIC ARE RESPECTED  
BY NATIONAL AND FOREIGN FUNCTIONARIES AND WHEN THERE IS  
CLARITY IN THE POLITICAL AGITATION AGAINST THE GOVERNMENT  
BY FOREIGN DIPLOMATIC FUNCTIONARIES WHO THREATEN THE GOVERN-  
MENT OR DISTRIBUTE ERIPS, HONORARIUMS AND PREBENDS TO THOSE WHO  
PLAYED THEIR GAME TO FRIGHTEN US. I HAVE REFRAINED FROM SPEAK-  
ING UNTIL MATTERS ARE CLEAR, TO COSTA RICANS AND TO THE  
INTERNATIONAL WORLD THE REFUSAL OF A SMALL COUNTRY -- BUT  
BOUND TO LAW -- TO KNEEL BEFORE FUNCTIONARIES OF A LARGE COUNTRY.  
END QUOTE

3. ACCUSATION IN THAT PARAGRAPH WITH ITS EXCLUSIVE REFERENCE  
TO VESCO CASE CAN ONLY REASONABLY BE INTERPRETED AS REFERRING  
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TO U.S. DIPLOMATS, AND SOME COSTA RICANS AND FOREIGN DIPLOMATIC

COLLEAGUES HAVE ALREADY CALLED THAT TO MY ATTENTION.

4. REFERRING TO ODUBER'S LETTER, PLN-CONTROLLED AFTERNOON  
LA HORA SAID ODUBER'S REMARKS ON VESCO CASE SHOW THAT QUOTE  
AN EMBASSY HAS BEEN INVOLVED UP TO ITS NECK IN MATTERS WHICH  
ARE COSTA RICAN CONCERN IN FLAGRANT VIOLATION OF ITS DIPLOMATIC  
PRIVILEGES. END QUOTE

5. ROUTINE MEETING OF CHIEFS OF MISSION EVENING AKVUST 5  
DISCUSSED ARTICLE LARGELY AT INITIATIVE OF AMBASSADOR OF BRAZIL  
AND VOTED SURPRISINGLY (I ABSTAINED) BY LARGE MAJORITY FOR THE  
ACTING DEAN (ITALY) AND SECRETARY OF THE CORPS (BRAZIL) TO RAISE  
THE MATTER INFORMALLY WITH FOREIGN MINISTER FACIO AT HIS EARLIEST  
CONVENIENCE ON GROUNDS THAT BROAD REFERENCE TO DIPLOMATS TENDS  
TO LEAVE THEM OPEN TO POSSIBLE SUSPICION.

6. I HAVE REQUESTED URGENT MEETING WITH PRESIDENT AT WHICH I  
INTEND TO EXPRESS MY SURPRISE AND CONCERN AT THIS ACCUSATION  
WHICH IS BEING GENERALLY INTERPRETED AS DIRECTED AGAINST U.S.  
AND TO ASK FOR ANY FURTHER INFORMATION HE WOULD BE GOOD ENOUGH  
TO PROVIDE.

7. IF DEPARTMENT HAS ANY REACTION TO THIS DEVELOPMENT, I  
WOULD APPRECIATE BEING INFORMED BY IMMEDIATE CABLE.  
TODMAN

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## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
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